For immediate release
July 7, 2006

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Virginia's Web portal redesign enhances access to services

RICHMOND — Virginia.gov, the Commonwealth's Web portal, has been redesigned to provide easier access to a multitude of information and services while incorporating the topics dominating Virginia's headlines.

"Our goal is to have an easy-to-use Web portal that is a starting point, or gateway, to the sources of online information and services in Virginia that address our citizens' most pressing questions and needs. The redesigned Virginia.gov site is that and more," said Secretary of Technology Aneesh Chopra.

"The redesigned Virginia.gov site is more intuitive for users. It has new and revamped services. The historic look of the site coincides with Jamestown's 400th anniversary. There are links to topics of importance to the Commonwealth and its citizens, such as transportation, economic development, tourism, and state government services," Secretary Chopra added. "It also provides information for people and businesses across the country and world interested in learning more about Virginia."

Commonwealth Chief Information Officer Lem Stewart, who leads the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA), said the redesign was the result of months of research, analysis and content updates designed to make sure that the portal is user friendly, highlights Virginia initiatives, offers new and revamped services, includes content provided by subject matter experts, and encourages repeat visits.

Among the enhancements:

- Intuitive navigation and improved topic organization
- Meaningful icons that serve as visual cues about content and portal categories
- New and enhanced features, such as an "I Want To" search that enables users to find services and forms, the homepage Commonwealth calendar, improved delivery of weather and regional traffic information
- Text and image based community map service that provides locality information, including services, weather and travel conditions, as well as tourist attractions and upcoming event feeds provided by Virginia Tourism Corporation

- Expert content delivery through partnerships with state agencies
- Everyday activities, such as a "Fact of the Week" and citizen photography

VITA partners with Virginia Interactive to develop and maintain the state's Web presence, which averages 477,002 visitors per month, a 61 percent increase from the previous year.

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About the Virginia Information Technologies Agency
VITA is the Commonwealth's consolidated technology services and solutions provider responsible for the operation of the state's technology infrastructure, governance and oversight of major IT projects, enterprise solutions, and procurement of technology-related goods and services on behalf of state and local governments. http://www.vita.virginia.gov.

About Virginia Interactive
Virginia Interactive, a subsidiary of NIC, manages the Commonwealth's portal and brands and markets eGovernment Web sites and services as Virginia.gov. Virginia.gov manages the official Virginia state Web portal, www.virginia.gov, and assists government entities with providing information and services via the Internet.